

Dr. Francisco Graña,
Belén, 1054, Lima, Peru

KE 0013448

C. C. Mr. Charles L. Risso-Gill,
Paseo Colon 285,
Buenos Aires,
Argentina.

July 23, 1941.

Dr. Francisco Graña,
Belén, 1054,
Lima,
Peru.

Dear Dr. Graña:

I have just received word from Mr. Risso-Gill of the Associated Ethyl Company, Limited, that he has discussed with you the carrying out of certain medical work in supervision of employees of the Government Refinery, at Torritos. I assume from Mr. Risso-Gill's letter that you are willing to undertake this work. Accordingly, I am sending you under separate cover some information on various phases of this problem and I shall ask Mr. Risso-Gill to forward to you some booklets in Spanish, which I have prepared for distribution to interested persons in Spanish-speaking countries. The articles are translations of publications that appear in American medical and scientific journals. They will give you the general experimental background of this field and will acquaint you with the problems which have arisen.

Briefly, your main responsibility will be to select men on the basis of their physical fitness and their reliability in carrying out instructions for their own protection. Men who are careless are definitely undesirable, and those who are unduly apprehensive are equally undesirable. What we want is a sensible, comparatively young, healthy man, who will recognize that if he conducts himself properly, he will be entirely safe in the work he is called upon to do. After the selection of these workmen, it will be necessary to examine them at approximately quarterly intervals so as to follow the state of their health, and also to make sure that they are doing their work carefully and safely. At the time the men are examined it is advisable to inspect the plant, so as to appreciate the care which is being given to details. On this account, it will be desirable for you to visit Callao, at regular intervals, and I would suggest the desirability of examining the men at the plant if the facilities there will permit. A medical memorandum which I am sending you will outline the general purposes and the nature of the medical care of these men.

During the period of some fifteen years in which we have

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maintained the supervision of mixing plants of this type several thousands of men in various parts of the United States and Canada, have been under our supervision. There have been no cases of lead poisoning among these men, and there is no reason to suppose that there will be, if the work is done as it is supposed to be done. The equipment used for mixing is simple in operation and entirely adequate from the point of view of safety. If this equipment is kept in good condition and if it is operated in accordance with instructions, there is no occasion for hazardous lead exposure. It is the primary purpose of our medical supervision to determine by the examination of the men whether they are doing the work as it should be done. If they show any evidence of lead absorption, one can be certain that they are not following the instructions. Under these conditions, it is necessary to bring the matter to the attention of the management and to correct any condition which is responsible for the unsatisfactory performance of the work.

As you will see from the articles supplied by Mr. Risso-Gill, there is no danger of lead poisoning from the handling and use of the mixed gasoline. Therefore, the primary danger is in connection with the handling and mixing of the concentrated fluid.

There is only one other danger which needs to be considered seriously; namely, the lead exposure which may arise in connection with cleaning of gasoline storage tanks. Small quantities of organic lead compounds may accumulate in the bottom of gasoline storage tanks over a long period of time. Men who enter these tanks to clean them may be exposed to these volatile lead compounds, unless they use precautionary measures which we have advised. I call your attention to these precautions in the back of the book of regulations, which Mr. Risso-Gill will send to you. He will discuss these matters with the management of the plant, but it is necessary that you should be familiar with these points, and that you should stress their importance to the management of the plant.

I should appreciate it if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter and the booklets which I am sending you. Also, I should like to hear from you from time to time, especially if there are any difficulties of any kind. Any questions which may come up in your mind should also be referred to me, since I try to keep in touch with our medical consultants and to keep them acquainted with any new developments in the field.

Please accept my thanks for your willingness to undertake this responsibility.

Cordially yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.